March/April 1987

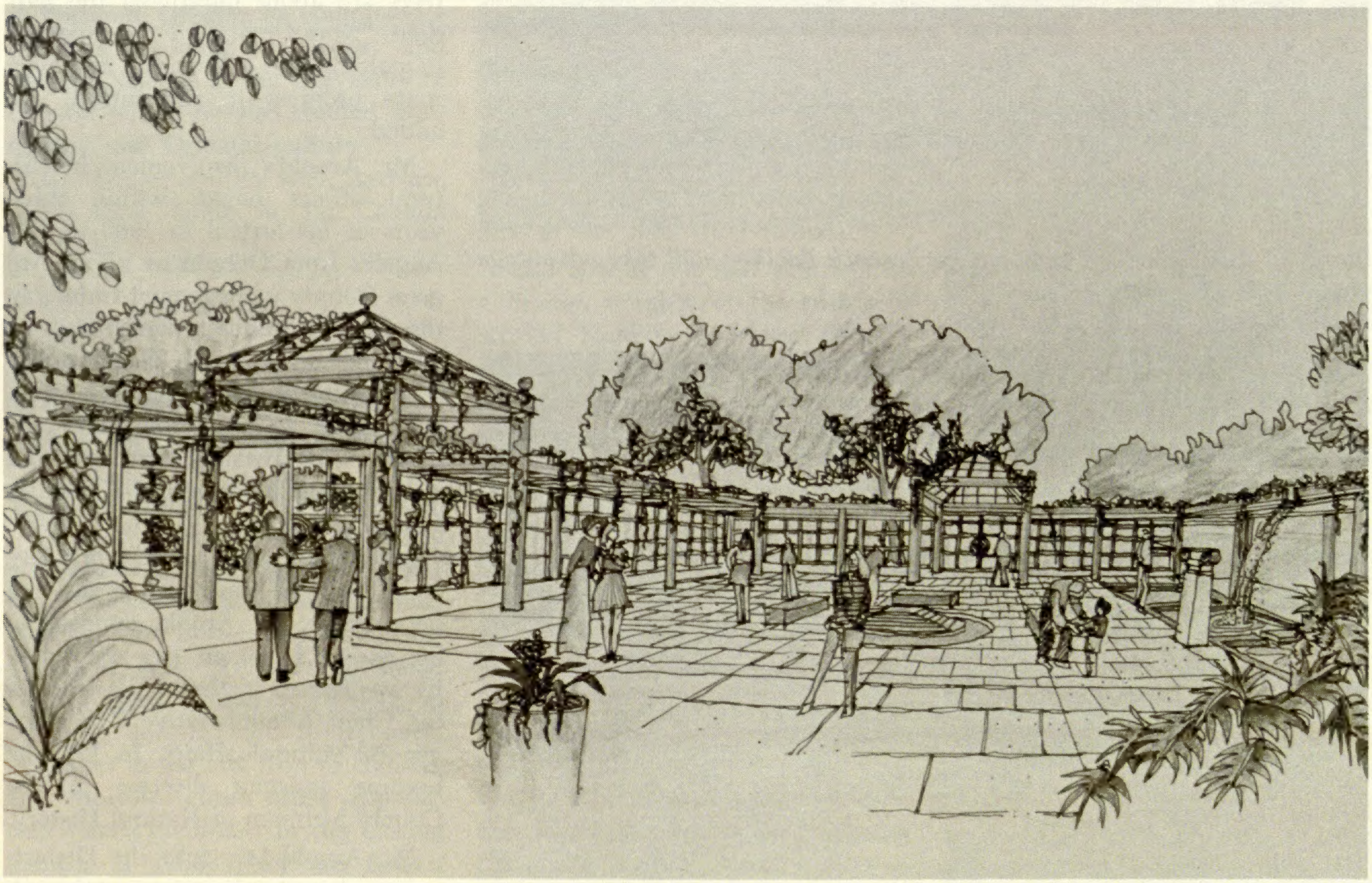
Lasca Leaves

Los Angeles County Department of Arboreta and Botanic Gardens

RENDERINGS OF PLANS SHOW MAJOR ARBORETUM CHANGES

Artist's renderings commissioned by the California Arboretum Foundation show how nine sections of the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum will look after the long range master plan is implemented. Master plan designers, Jones and Jones, targeted several areas for dramatic changes. An Arboretum gateway and the Peacock Pavilion dining terrace will utilize existing buildings. New structures include an education building that will house the library and herbarium, a lagoon bridge and a tropical plant shade pavilion.

Landscape architects Jones & Jones were chosen over six competing designers on the strength of the master

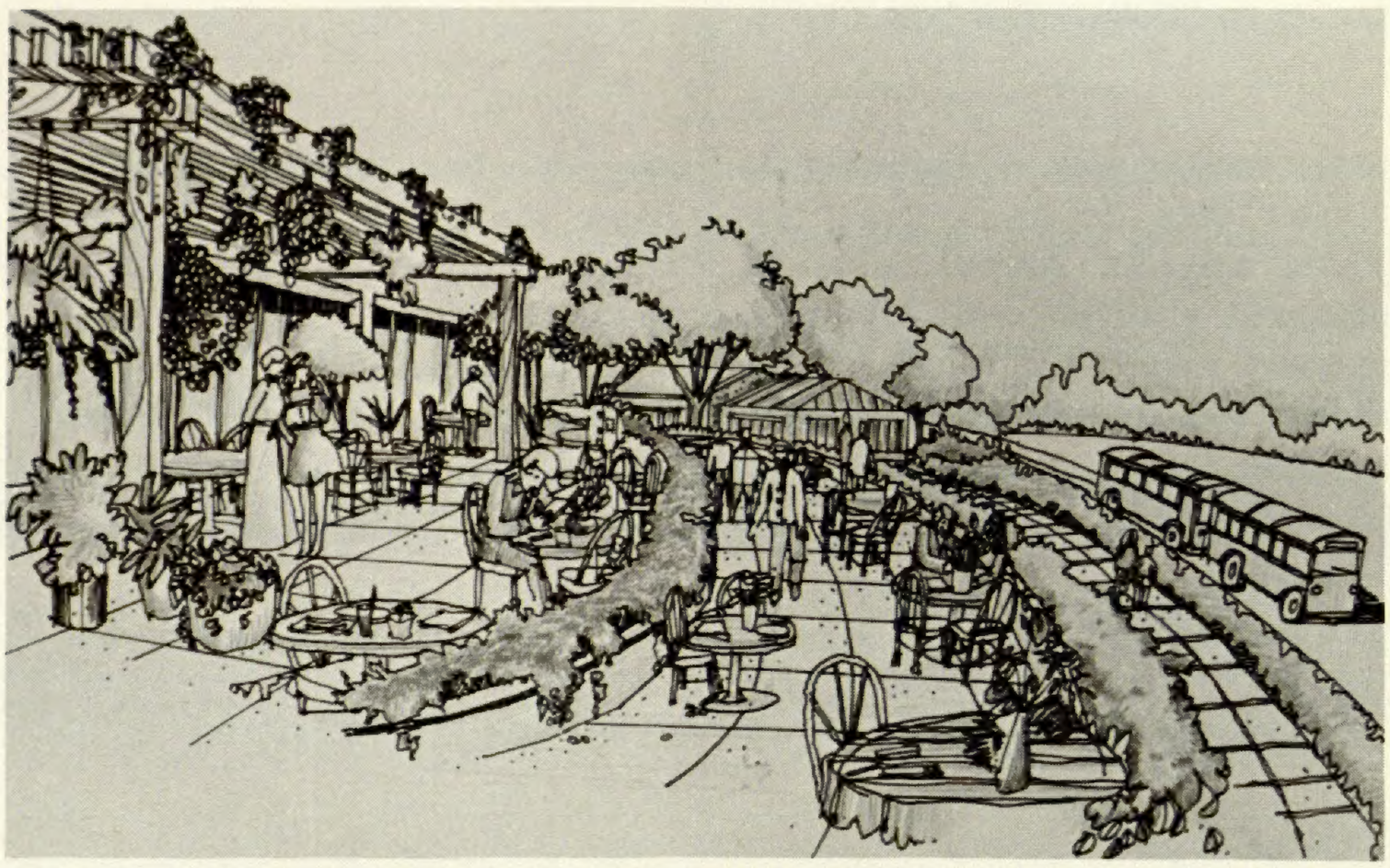


LuAnn B. Munns

This view of the small entry courtyard shows the gateways that lead to the Garden Festival Green and to the Peacock Pavilion and Tram Ramada. The entrance to the Demonstration Home Gardens is to the right from this perspective.

plan outline they presented to the Trustees and Francis Ching, director of the Los Angeles County Department of Arboreta and Botanic Gardens.

The nationally known, Seattle-based firm won an award for a design used at Woodland Park Zoological Gardens in Seattle. Jones and Jones has also been involved in planning gardens at the Wild Animal Park in San Diego and the Dallas Arboretum.



Proposed dining terraces west of the Peacock Pavilion will take advantage of the panoramic view.

A bridge reminiscent of the one painted by Monet will span the Upper Lagoon, bringing visitors closer to the water and plants.

LEON ARNOLD NAMED TO POST BY DIRECTOR CHING

In February, Leon G. Arnold, a veteran of 26 years service with Los Angeles County, assumed his duties as assistant director for the Department of Arboreta and Botanic Gardens. Mr. Arnold replaces Roy Ito who retired in January.

Mr. Arnold, immediate past president of the California Association of Museums, also has served on the board of directors of the Western Museums Conference, Los Angeles County Management Council and the Western Governmental Research Association.

For the past 13 years Mr. Arnold has been assistant director at the Los Angeles County Natural History Museum. During that time, he has been involved in programs that are similar to those at the Arboretum. The experience Mr. Arnold has had in reviewing grants for the Institute of Museum Services, for instance, will be very useful to the Arboretum.

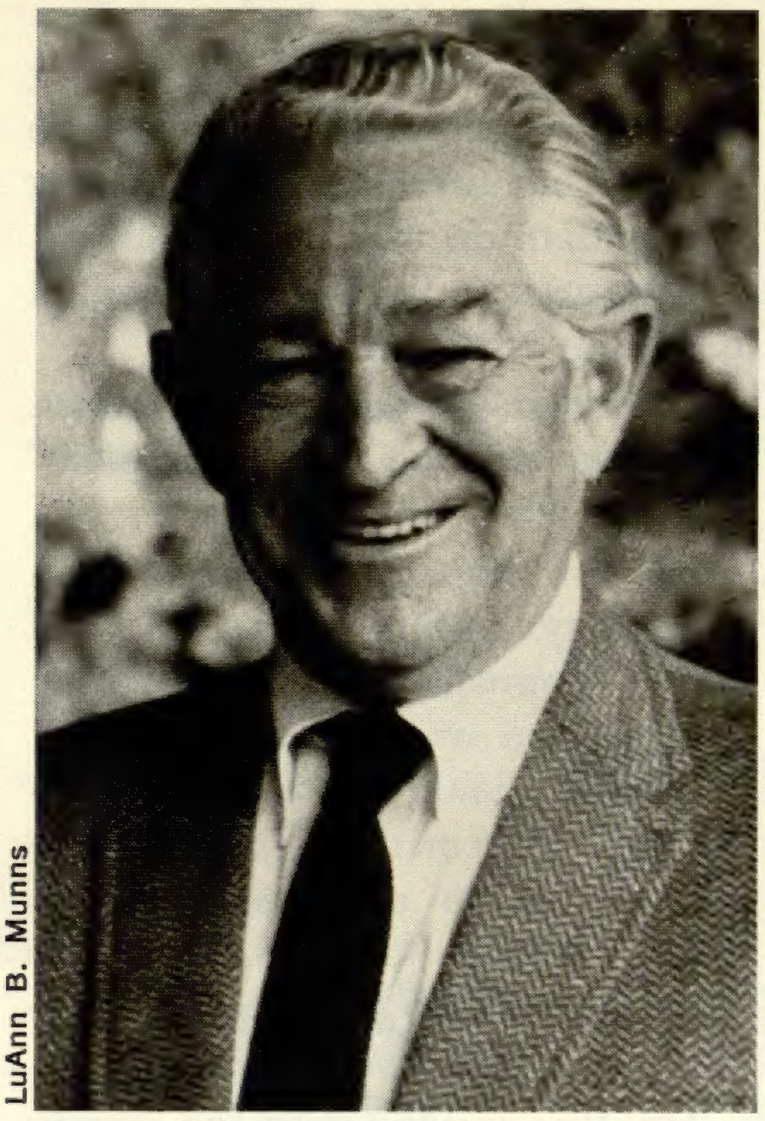
The Arboretum and the Museum most resemble one another in that both institutions are heavily dependent upon private support groups.

After attending a recent Board of Governors meeting, Mr. Arnold commented on how enthused the volunteers are about improving the gardens. "Now I can lend my expertise in molding that enthusiasm into even more progress in the future," he added.

Mr. Arnold's involvement in cultural affairs began within three years of his arrival in 1960 in Los Angeles from Oregon as a Los Angeles County management trainee in the Chief Administrative Office. In 1963 he became the first County coordinator of the Los Angeles Music Center with responsibility for County involvement through the opening of the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion.

After five years as County-City coordinator of the contract services department, Mr. Arnold returned to his earlier focus on the arts when he was named leader of the team in the Chief Administrative Office for general cultural affairs. In 1973 he became assistant director of the County Museum of Natural History.

Mr. Arnold brings to the Department a longstanding interest in cultural affairs. After earning a bachelor's degree in history and political



LuAnn B. Munns

Leon G. Arnold

science at Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Oregon, he completed a teaching credential in history and political science at the University of Oregon where he also studied philosophy and Oriental culture.

Mr. Arnold and his wife, Barbara, make their home in La Canada Flintridge.

NEW MEMBERS STRENGTHEN BOARD OF TRUSTEES RANKS

With the coming of 1987, three new persons joined the Board of Trustees of the California Arboretum Foundation. The new members include Ron Bettenhausen, a vice-president with Wells Fargo Bank; Cheryl (Mrs. William K.) Doyle, an attorney, and Edward S. Renwick, a partner in the law firm of Hannah and Morton. Three other appointtees joined the Board in the closing months of 1986. They are Robert Powell, Richard A. Grant Jr, Hannah G. Bradley and Marla (Mrs. James T.) Carter.

BALDWIN BONANZA XVII OFFERS DISTINCTIVE PLANTS

To restate a cliche, the more Baldwin Bonanza changes, the more it stays the same. At Baldwin Bonanza XVII, the California Arboretum Foundation will sell rare and unusual plants, just as they did at the first benefit plant sale 17 years ago.

Changes become evident only with a closer examination of the inventory of plants that will be for sale this coming May 3. Now that gardening fashion dictates more color in the garden, the Foundation sale will place a heavy emphasis on unusual perennials, especially ones that may not yet be available from mainstream nurseries.

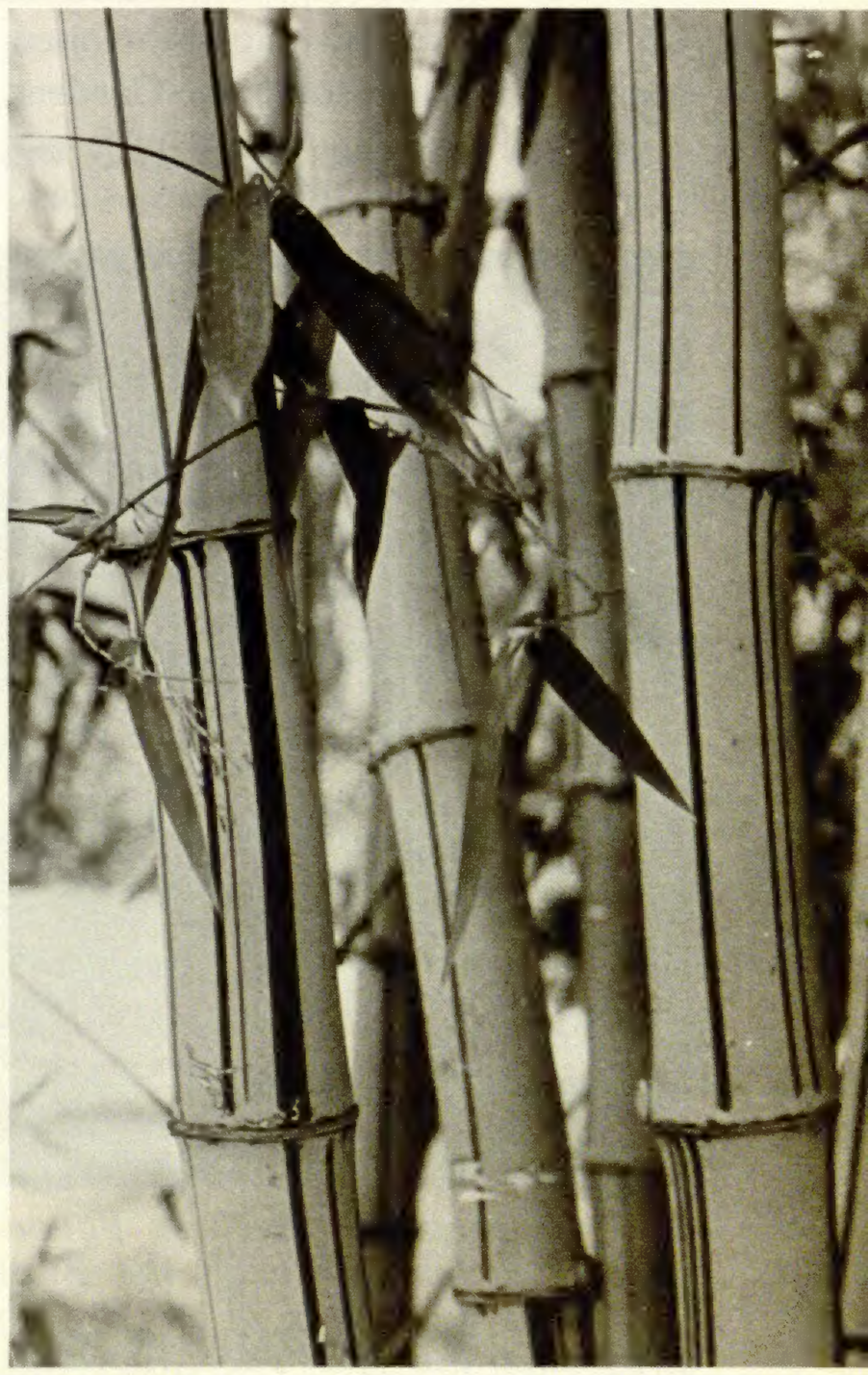
One example is the Matilija poppy (*Romneya coulteri*), a native California perennial with huge, crinkled, silklike petals that attracted British gardeners when it was first carried across the Atlantic about 200 years ago. For the first time, a good supply of these poppies will be available at the Baldwin Bonanza.

Also new at the 1987 sale will be a limited number of the plants of striped bamboo *Bambusa vulgaris* 'Vittata.' This stately bamboo with its golden canes marked with brushstrokes of green has been slowly increasing since 1962 when it was planted beside the lake at the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum. Now shoppers with enough space can take home the start of their own multicolored bamboo grove.

Canny collectors of specialty plants have long been familiar with the most effective method for copping unusual specimens to add to their holdings; they come early for the preview party, and as soon as the gates open, they head directly for the section selling plants in their field of interest. Only after nabbing the rare specimens do they relax around the refreshment tables.

This year the heavy traffic is likely to be in the direction of the staghorn ferns *(Platycerium* spp*)* and the palm section. A notable selection of staghorns has been propagated and the plants are now large enough to sell. One of the best collections of tropical palms in Southern California will be for sale to self-admitted "palm nuts" and the more casual collectors who just want something different for around their pools or patios.

Baldwin Bonanza XVII chairman, Tom McDuffie, promises a pleasant evening of shopping and socializing during the preview party Saturday evening, May 2, from 5 to 7:30 p.m. So mark your calendar for that evening to assure the best selection of plants before the general public arrives on Sunday.



Striped bamboo (Bambusa vulgaris *'Vittata'*) *will be sold for the first time at the Baldwin Bonanza.*

ROY ITO RETIRES FROM STAFF TO TRAVEL, WRITE AND FISH

After 13 years, Roy T. Ito, Assistant Director of the Los Angeles County Department of Arboreta and Botanical Gardens, retired last January at the age of 57. Mr. Ito is neither a botanist nor a horticulturist, but instead a man with extensive administrative experience in Los Angeles County government. Still he enjoys plants and gardening very much.

During his years with the Department, Mr. Ito was administrative liaison in the development and completion of several major capital projects such as Ayres Hall of Environmental Education at the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum, Van de Kamp Hall and Administrative Complex at Descanso Gardens, and the Administrative/Education Complex at South Coast Botanic Gardens. He also managed the opening of Virginia Robinson Gardens.

Mr. Ito said that Ayres Hall was his favorite among the projects he worked on. "The fact it got built at all – and finding the funding – was a miracle," he said. "Once the decision was made to build, though, we knew the hall would be completed."

His retirement plans include traveling to Europe and East Coast cities including New York and Boston, fishing, playing golf and writing short stories. He plans to spend two to three months in Japan gathering information on his family history. His research so far has been limited to talking with relatives.

LuAnn B. Munns

Roy T. Ito

"I'm looking forward to retirement. My time will be fully occupied," said Mr. Ito.

He also plans to take courses in archeology, anthropology, art and music appreciation, photography and creative writing.

"People should retire early to enjoy their retirement so that they are not too old to do these kinds of things," Mr. Ito said. "If they retire early and realize that they have to work then they can go back."

Mr. Ito's service with the county included five years as chief analyst in the Chief Administrative Office, five years as personnel officer at the Department of Public Social Services and ten years as senior personnel analyst at the Department of Personnel.

Judy Nagby

The California Arboretum Foundation received a sizable donation through the Brotherhood Crusade, thanks to organizers of a Las Vegas Night at the Arboretum last fall. The Arboretum staff joined their counterparts in the Agricultural Commissioner/ Weights and Measures Dept. to raise a total of $2,377. This was divided between the Brotherhood Crusade and United Way. Celebrating success of the campaign are (from left) Arboretum committee members Cindy MacDougall and Irma Diaz, Brotherhood Crusade representative Danny Bakewell, committee member Lorraine Saylor, United Way representative Marty Atherton, Director Francis Ching, and Committee chair Charlette Larson.

(LASCA continues after page 32)

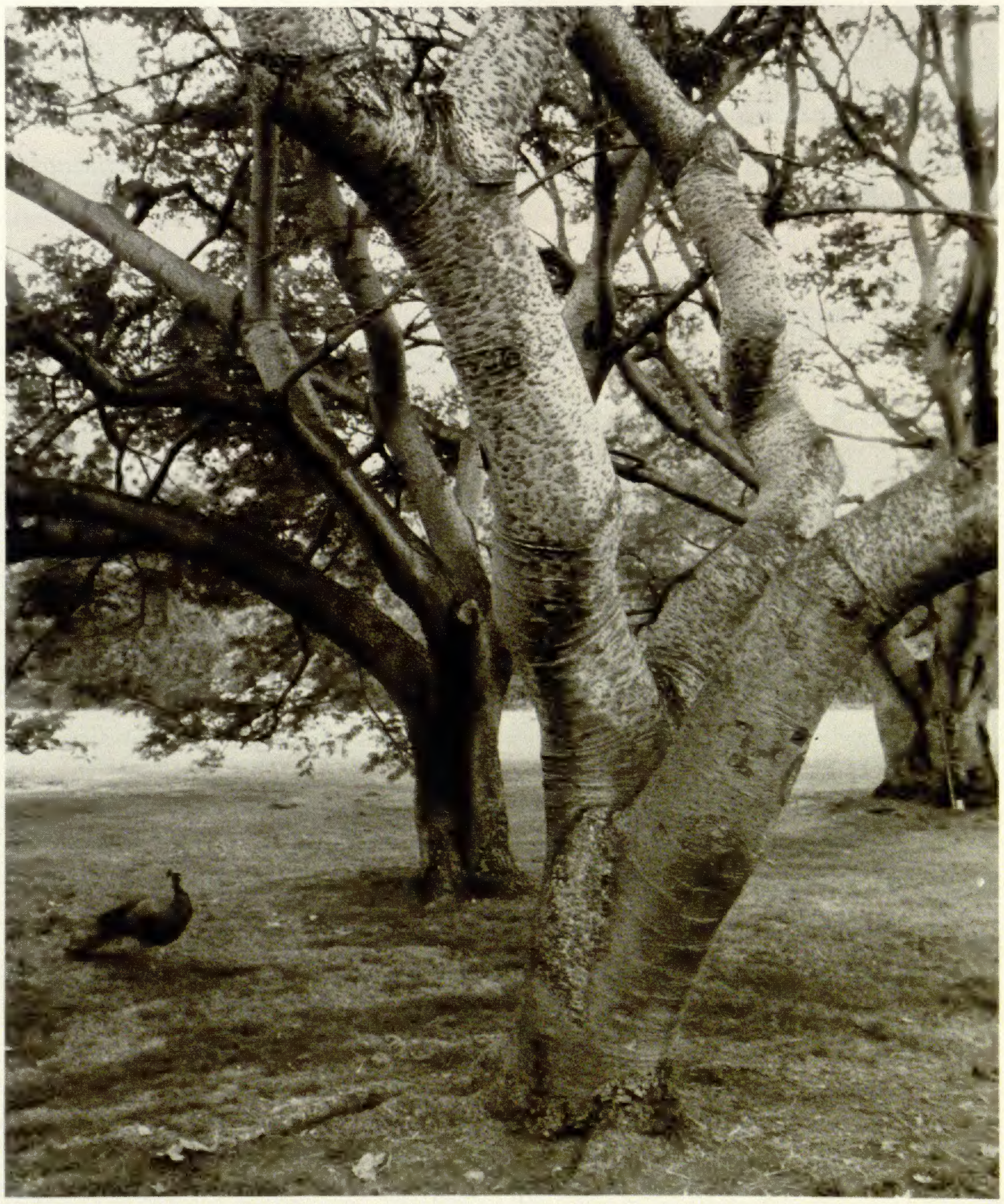
Plant Portrait

THE EAR TREES

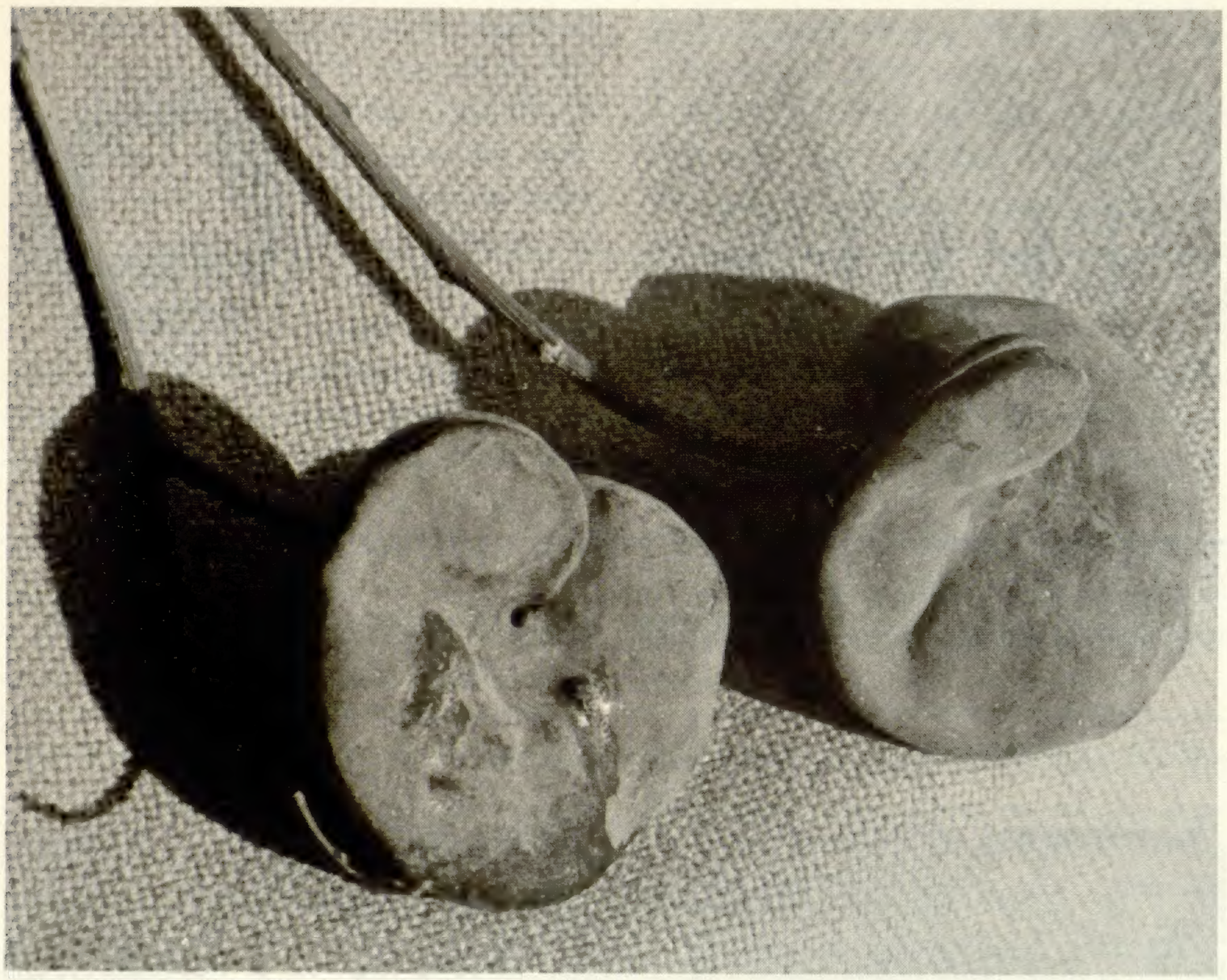
by James Bauml

FOR MAJESTY, form and shade, few trees can match the ear trees of the genus *Enterolobium*. We are fortunate at the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum to have specimens of two species, *E. cyclocarpum* and *E. contortisiliquum* (formerly *E. timbouva*). Three specimens of the latter at the Arboretum were recently listed among the outstanding trees of Los Angeles because of their rarity and massed planting on the main lawn south of the Bauer Pool. The ear trees are otherwise conspicuously absent from Southern California. A specimen measuring 40 feet tall and 60 feet across once grew in Elysian Park in Los Angeles but no longer exists today. In 1912, 30-foot tall ear trees were thriving at the nursery of Dr. Francesco Franceschi in Santa Barbara. A few others are grown today in the San Diego area.

The ear trees belong to the mimosa subfamily (Mimosoideae) of the pea family (Leguminosae). The genus *Enterolobium* contains five to 10 species of unarmed trees from tropical America and the West Indies. Its name comes from the Greek *enteron* (intestines) and *lobos* (a lobe), alluding as does the common name, to the form of the seed pod.



Thick trunks branching near the ground support the extensive canopy of the ear tree (Enterolobium contortisiliquum). *Photos by LuAnn B. Munns.*



Broad, curved seed pods of E. contortisiliquum *give the ear tree its common name.*

Enterolobium cyclocarpum, found from Mexico to northern South America and the West Indies, is known by several common names including ear tree, orellera, corotu, caro-caro, parota, elephant's ear, earpod, and guanacaste. The last name, perhaps the most widely used, is derived from the Nahuatl (Aztec language) word for ear tree. This species is a large, fast-growing, handsome deciduous tree with a very stout, short trunk, three to six feet or more in diameter, and a broadly symmetrical spreading crown. It can reach 60-100 feet or more in height and as much as 75-150 feet across. Many villages in the drier areas of Central America are said to conduct markets in the trees' shade.

The leaves are six to 10 inches long and bipinnate (twice-divided) into four to nine primary divisions,

This grove of three ear trees is listed among the exceptional trees of Los Angeles.

each with 20-30 pairs of asymmetrical oblong leaflets up to ½ inch long and 3/16 inch wide. This lacy foliage is consumed by livestock in the savannas where it grows naturally. The small whitish or greenish flowers are grouped into rounded heads about one inch across.

Guanacaste's distinctive seed pods are blackish or a polished dark brown. They have the typical flattened, broad form of a bean pod. These pods, however, are curved or coiled into a circle or disk three to four or more inches across with the two blunt ends almost touching or overlapping. They slightly resemble a human(or other) ear, and in Latin America, people with large ears are sometimes given the nickname "guanacaste." The pods are used for stock food and, when young, are considered edible by humans. These pods contain several dark brown, elliptical seeds of 3/4 inch long which are used in leis in Hawaii. The seeds themselves are considered edible after toasting. Unlike many legume fruits, these pods do not split open at maturity to release the seeds. Presumably, the fruits decompose on the ground or are eaten by animals which disperse the seeds.

The wood of the guanacaste is moderately durable and hard. It has been used for construction, carpentry, furniture, and veneer as well as for canoes and water troughs. The heartwood is walnut brown, often reddish tinged. It polishes well and does not split or twist, but the sawdust has been observed to cause allergic reactions in workers and to sicken or kill cattle. Sawdust has also been reported as a barbasco thrown into streams to kill or stupefy fish.

Several additional uses have been attributed to the guanacaste. Both bark and fruits contain saponins and have been used as a soap substitute. These parts also have been used for tanning. A syrup from the bark is used for colds. A dark-colored gum, "goma de guanacaste" or "goma de caro" is a substitute for gum arabic.

Enterolobium contortisiliquum has an overall resemblance to *E. cyclocarpum*. It is variously called timbo, timbo colorado, timbouva, pacara, or oreja de negro. Its more restricted native range includes parts of Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Paraguay. It differs from *E. cyclocarpum* in having leaves to only six inches long with two to seven primary divisions. These have fewer pairs (eight to 23) of longer (1/2-inch to one inch) leaflets on the secondary leaf axes. Also, the fruit is somewhat smaller, up to three inches across and glaucescent (covered with a grayish waxy bloom); and the seeds may grow to just over 1/2 inch long. The pod of the timbouva forms only a half to 2/3 of a circle compared to the complete circle of the guanacaste. Like the guanacaste, parts of the tree are used in place of soap. In Brazil, the roots and seed coats are the source of an efficient remedy for intestinal worms.

Both the ear trees grow rapidly, and their lofty branches provide a welcome source of shade. They have been used extensively as park, plaza and avenue trees in Latin America and in other tropical and subtropical regions. They succeed well in ordinary soils in open locations and may be easily propagated by seed. The health of these specimens at the Arboretum in Arcadia is evidence enough of their unexpected cold-tolerance. In the landscape, their size and large surface roots preclude their use in certain situations, but they would be a welcome addition in any open spot where shade and their spreading form would be appreciated.

James Bauml is taxonomist and senior biologist at the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum.

SEPTEMBER ☆ UNDER ☆ THE ☆ STARS ☆

September 11

An Elegant Party with:

Dinner

Entertainment

Dancing

Tours of the Arboretum

Invitations will be mailed

CAF MEMBERS SAVE THESE DATES

FLOWER ARRANGING

April 27

Sheila Macqueen
Honored for her teaching by
Garden Club of America and the Royal Horticultural Society

$50 Lecture-Demonstration-Lunch-Arrangements Critiqued

SPECIAL DAY TRIPS

May 23
Lotusland
Tour & Lunch

July 11
Santa Cruz Island
Walking Tour

Reservations Limited

CALL (818) 447-8207 for information and reservations

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MARCH, APRIL MAY 1987

LOS ANGELES STATE AND COUNTY ARBORETUM, Arcadia

MARCH 7, 8 — Sat. 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Sun. 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Flower Show
Sierra Madres Girl Scouts

MARCH 14 — 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Environmental Education Fair
California Arboretum Foundation

APRIL 4,5 — Sat. 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Sun. 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Specialty Iris Show
Southern California Iris Society

APRIL 11, 12 — Sat 12 to 4:30 p.m.
Sun. 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Amaryllis Show
Southern California Hemerocallis & Amaryllis Society

APRIL 18, 19 — Sat 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Sun. 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Bonsai Show
Shohin Bonsai Society

APRIL 25, 26 — Sat. 1 to 4:30 p.m.
Sun. 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Rose Show
Pacific Rose Society

APRIL 27 — all day
Flower Arranging Symposium
Sheila Macqueen, floral designer, holder of Victoria Medal of Honour and internationally known author

MAY 2 — 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Preview Party
Baldwin Bonanza

MAY 3 — 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
BALDWIN BONANZA XVII, Benefit Plant Sale
California Arboretum Foundation

MAY 9, 10 — Sat. 12 to 4 p.m.
Sun. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Geranium Show
LA Branch of International Geranium Society

MAY 17 — 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Epiphyllum Show
Epiphyllum Society of America

MAY 23, 24, 25 — 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Bonsai Show
Santa Anita Bonsai Society

MAY 30, 31 — 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Azalea Show
Valley Satsuki Azalea Society

SOUTH COAST BOTANIC GARDEN, Palos Verdes Peninsula

MARCH 1 — 2 p.m.
Talk "Botany of Bromeliads"
Stan Oleson

MARCH 8 — 2 p.m.
Demonstration, Sale of African Violets
George Crouchet, Ralph Bredon

MARCH 15 — 2 p.m.
Demonstration "Unique Flower Arrangements"
Lindy Stroud

MARCH 22 — 2 p.m.
Slide Show "How to Approach Your Home Landscaping"
Richard Jark

MARCH 29 — 2 p.m.
Demonstration, Geraniums
Susan Tufenkian

APRIL 5 — 2 p.m.
Tour of Volunteer Garden
SCBG Docents

APRIL 12 — 2 p.m.
Slide Show "Gardens Around the World"
Lorena Bach

APRIL 26 — 2 p.m.
Spring Concert, Richard Schwalbe directing
Palos Verdes Symphonic Band

MAY 16, 17 — 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
FIESTA DE FLORES, benefit plant sale
South Coast Botanic Garden Foundation

MAY 23, 24 — 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Epiphyllum Show
South Bay Epiphyllum Society

MAY 31 — 12 to 5 p.m.
Rose Show
South Coast Rose Society

DESCANSO GARDENS, La Canada

MARCH 6 — 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.
Discover Descanso
Descanso Gardens Guild

MARCH 11 — 7 to 9:30 p.m.
Xeriscape Symposium III
Descanso Gardens Guild

MARCH 14,15 — 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Daffodil Show
Southern California Daffodil Society

MARCH 28 through APRIL 5 — 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Spring Flower Show
Descanso Gardens Guild

APRIL 3 through 30 — 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Artist of the Month
Dory Grade

APRIL 18, 19 — Sat. 1 to 4:30 p.m.
Sun. 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Rose Show
San Fernando Valley Rose Society

MAY 1 through JUNE 4 — 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Artists of the Month
Valley Watercolor Society members

MAY 1 — 10 to 11:30 a.m.
May Day Celebration
Descanso Gardens Guild

MAY 23, 24 — 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Chrysanthemum Plant Sale
Glendale Chrysanthemum Society

MAY 24 — 2:30 p.m.
Performing Arts Program
Descanso Gardens Guild

MAY 30 through JUNE 1 — 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Bromeliad Show
San Fernando Bromeliad Society

MAY 31 — 2:30 p.m.
Performing Arts Program
Descanso Gardens Guild